

Medical History

Newsletter

AUSTRALIAN AND NEW ZEALAND SOCIETY OF THE HISTORY OF MEDICINE INC

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THE PRESIDENT'S PAGE

With this first newsletter for 2018, a warm welcome to our new members, and best wishes to the ANZSHM community for an enjoyable and productive year. There's a brief window of time to submit abstracts to the medical history stream at the Australian Historical Association's 2018 Conference, Canberra, in July. Abstracts are submitted online, via the AHA conference website, closing date is 12 March. The conference theme, 'The Scale of History', is a fabulous concept which applies well to medical history in terms of size and scope alone. We hope to attract a full day of papers to the medical history stream. During the AHA conference week, we'll be holding the Society's AGM.

We're on the road to ANZSHM's 16th Biennial Conference in New Zealand, convened by Professor Linda Bryder from 3-7 December 2019. Holding the conference in December makes it possible to contemplate adding on some holiday time in the New Zealand summer, either before or after this event. And getting the news out to colleagues will help to position the conference as a prominent meeting in the year. We'd love to see an influx of medical history scholars from outside Australia and New Zealand. If members have these connections, encourage your colleagues to save the conference dates.

Membership subscriptions are due by 31 March. This year, we are offering electronic payment of subscriptions, via a new payment platform. For those who prefer ANZSHM's existing methods for payment, we welcome your cheque or your credit card details in the usual way on the membership form included with the newsletter.

For payments online, we've opted for an Australian-owned and operated business, called Trybooking, which prides itself on superior customer service. We expect it to simplify our administration substantially. Trybooking requires users to register an email address. It processes quickly, receipts can be printed immediately, and a receipt is sent to the email address attached to the payment.

At the Trybooking website, ANZSHM has a dedicated membership page where all of this occurs. Individuals may update their details there. At this page, members can also choose how they want to receive the newsletter: electronically, as a pdf document, or by the customary method of postal mail. In coming days, to those members with a current email address, we'll be sending a live weblink connecting to ANZSHM's membership page.

Trybooking may not be familiar to everyone, but it is an easy platform to use. For those who are willing to give it a go, ANZSHM's Honorary Secretary, Dr Charmaine Robson (anzshm@anzshm.org.au 0412 721 222) and I (mmgrehan@bigpond.com 03 9484 8076) will be on hand to help resolve any issues. We welcome your feedback about the process.

Madonna Grehan
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ALL ABOUT OURSELVES

Members of the ANZSHM describe their life, work and interests

I am a Melbourne-based medical historian, with a PhD in History of Medicine from the University of Melbourne. I regard myself as being on the threshold of my academic career, despite a number of career achievements. Although I also work as a speech pathologist, I publish and deliver guest lectures in areas of history of medicine and experimental science that interest me, and (I hope) interest my audience.

My research areas include nineteenth-century medicine, notably medicine in incarcerated populations and particularly transported convicts in England, Bermuda, Gibraltar and Australia. Other areas include history of therapeutics and *materia medica*, and the history of ship-borne diseases such as yellow fever, scurvy and Asiatic cholera and how these played a role in the production of medical knowledge.

I am a proud member of the Royal Society of Medicine in Wimpole Street, London, and in 2011 was awarded the Norah Schuster Prize for my work on experimental therapeutics during the cholera epidemics in London in the 1830s. In 2016 I worked as a Research Assistant at Monash University for the production of the documentary 'Death or Liberty' which first viewed on ABC1 in January 2017 (and has often been repeated on ABC iview). It also aired in the UK in English, Welsh and Irish. It was a visual realisation of the work of Dr Tony Moore's book about the Irish political prisoners who were sent to New South Wales and Van Diemen's Land.

As most of you will know, I was co-guest editor with Dr James Dunk of the ANZSHM journal *Health and History* for the recent special edition 'Incarceration, migration, dispossession and discovery: medicine in colonial Australia'. This year I am co-convenor of the History of Medicine Stream of the Australian Historical Association's Annual Conference 'The Scale of History', to be held at the Australian National University in Canberra this July.

I have always had an interest in all kinds of histories, music, art, literature, astronomy and physics. But one area where my passion/obsession lies is medicine, as it is integral to my

day-today life. Illness, injury and disease does not discriminate; it is the one thing that unites all of us, despite our respective backgrounds and net-worth. The quest to understand diseases and conditions that were a mystery to medical science is something I find very exciting. What motivated medical scientists in the nineteenth century is no different to what motivates today's researchers. It's only the methodology that is different. When you are reading hospital records and research notes that are hundreds of years old, where physicians were just on the threshold of discovery, I find it not only a privilege, but a unique opportunity to see the workings of the human mind leading up to and including that eureka moment. It is something I will never grow tired of, and has made me realise that nothing has changed in the human condition for centuries. No matter what we discover, and despite advances in all areas of science (not just medical science), we will continue to ask questions.

History of Medicine was a path that more or less chose me. Faced with the task of going through Dad's belongings after his death in 2002, I found some historical artefacts that had been packed away by the family and forgotten about. Among them were a letter book, a ledger book, and an 1813 *materia medica* belonging to the convict establishment at Bermuda. After some preliminary research, I discovered that there were some significant yellow fever epidemics in Bermuda, and some experimental usages of therapeutics on the convicts there in an effort to allay the symptoms of the sometimes fatal virus. Thus began my journey with the history of medicine. A journey that I am still enjoying.

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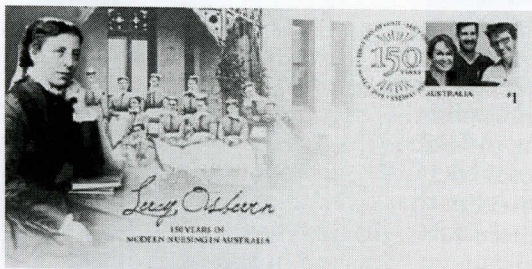
MEMBERS' NEWS

Welcome!

Robin Dunlop (NSW)
Warner Mooney (VIC)
Elizabeth Milford (VIC)
Kirsty O'Keefe (VIC)
Luigi Santacroce (ITALY)
Kenneth Young (WA)

LUCY OSBURN

Two of our members, past president Judith Godden and former Australian Nursing Council CEO Marilyn Gendeck, have persuaded Australia Post to issue a pre-stamped envelope on 5 March 2018 to mark the 150th anniversary of the arrival in Sydney of Lucy Osburn and five trained nurses. As Judith stated in her initial approach to Australia Post 'as her trained nurses moved to hospitals throughout Australia, they inaugurated a new era in hospital care and nursing. In achieving this, Lucy Osburn founded a new professional occupation and permanently improved patient care within hospitals. Commemorating Lucy Osburn's arrival would be a tribute to nearly 350,000 practising nurses in Australia.'



ISHM NOTES

The big event for the ISHM this year is the 46th biennial congress in Lisbon, Portugal, from 3-7 September 2018. It will be held in the Medical Faculty of the Universidade Nova de Lisboa (Lisbon Nova School).

Lisbon is a beautiful, historically very rich city and the congress looks to exploit all of that. The website <https://46ishm.wixsite.com/46ishm> with its fascinating photos is very enticing. Abstracts for presentations are being called for now and can be submitted on the link <https://goo.gl/VwUdXv>.

Following the congress on 8 and 9 September there will be conducted tours to the regional cities of Porto and Coimbra.

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CONGRATULATIONS

Professor Janet McCalman became a Companion in the Order of Australia (AC) in the 2018 Australia Day Honours List 'for eminent service to education, particularly in the field of social history, as a leading academic, researcher and author, as a contributor to multi-disciplinary curriculum development, and through the promotion of history to the wider community'. In reporting this honour the University of Melbourne noted Janet's 'particular expertise and reputation in the history of health and medicine'.

ARMISTICE CRUISE

The Wild Earth Travel cruise from Thessalonika to Athens (11-20 October 2018) has been re-named 'The centenary of armistice in the Mediterranean' to reflect more clearly the geographical focus.

The guest speaker will be Emeritus Professor Jay Winter of Yale University, an internationally renowned scholar of the First World War, author of a number of books on the topic and the editor of the *Cambridge History of the First World War*.

For a detailed itinerary and information on costs go to <https://www.wildearth-travel.com/trip/armistice-wwis-eastern-fronts/>

EDITOR'S COLUMN

Contributions to the Newsletter are always welcome. The next deadline for copy is 15 May 2018. Copy should be sent to the editor, Derek A Dow at d.dow@auckland.ac.nz. Suggestions for changes to the format or content are always welcome.

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AMPI NEWS

Colonial Doctors as Research Scientists

Doctors were probably the largest group of scientifically-trained professionals to settle in the Australian colonies. They were prominent in the Philosophical Society (Royal Society) of New South Wales from the 1820s; in the Mechanics Institutes established in the 1830s and 1840s; and in the Royal Societies of Tasmania, Victoria and South Australia, set up in the 1840s and 1850s.

Although doctors often gave popular talks on scientific and technical subjects, only a handful participated actively in scientific research, whether in medicine or in other fields. Those who joined exploring parties as botanists have been the subject of many publications, but those active in other areas of research are less well known.

Some came to the colonies with an established reputation. George Britton Halford, for example, had an enviable reputation as a comparative physiologist and experimental cardiologist. As professor of Anatomy, Physiology and Pathology at the University of Melbourne from 1862, teaching commitments left little time for research, and he is remembered here mainly for his inconclusive work on the use of ammonia in snakebite.



John Hutchinson
(1811-61)

Halford was one of several immigrant doctors whose research stalled in the colonies. Another was John Hutchinson MD London, a distinguished amateur physiologist, and inventor of the spirometer. Hutchinson sailed for Victoria in 1852, leaving behind not only his wife and three children, but also his important invention. He did no more research in respiratory physiology.

After a few desultory years at Bendigo, he went off to Fiji, where he died in depressed circumstances.

Yet another stalled research career was that of the military surgeon and marine biologist John Vaughan Thompson, who arrived in Sydney in 1836 to take charge of the Colonial Medical Service. During the previous 20 years he had been

with the army at Cork. There he had conducted a brilliant series of experiments in marine zoology, proving the existence of metamorphosis in crustacea. In Sydney alleged deficiencies in his administration led to his dismissal in 1843. Apparently demoralised by controversy, he lost the will to continue with research.

Nevertheless, some doctors did actively pursue scientific research in the colonies. Such was Robert John Lewis Ellery FRAS, who had developed an interest in astronomy while training as a surgeon in London. After coming out to Victoria in 1852 he was briefly in medical practice before being appointed Director of the Melbourne Observatory - a position he held for over 40 years. He was President of the Royal Society of Victoria for 20 years (1866-85).

In a more humble capacity, John Day emigrated to Victoria in 1850 and worked as a country GP while conducting research on medical applications of hydrogen peroxide and ozone - using his tiny laundry as a laboratory. He demonstrated some of his best work at meetings of the Medical Society of Victoria, and gained international recognition.

Two Australian-born doctor-scientists may also be mentioned. Originally from Tasmania, Edmund Charles Hobson participated in the fledgling scientific community there in 1839 and 1840 before moving to Melbourne, where his scientific interests continued. He published notable zoological papers in the *Tasmanian Journal of Natural Science* in 1841, and his work in comparative anatomy bore fruit in a small anatomical museum. A generation later, Edward Charles Stirling, a native of South Australia, held hospital and university positions before becoming Director of the South Australian Museum in 1884. Among his many scientific achievements as an ethnographer and palaeontologist was his work on the *Diprotodon* discovered at Lake Callabonna in 1888.

In the latter part of the nineteenth century, Australian science began to be institutionalised in the colonial museums and universities. This in turn prepared the way for the establishment in the twentieth century of dedicated Australian research institutes, and a new generation of Australian medical scientists such as Howard Florey and MacFarlane Burnet, both of whom were born in the final years of the colonial era.

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Science and medicine hand in hand

Like their Australian counterparts, many of New Zealand's nineteenth century doctors were actively involved in the various scientific bodies which emerged as virtual replicas of their British equivalents, as office bearers and speakers. While some addressed medical or clinical topics, many digressed into other disciplines, such as botany, which had initially entered the university curricula as medical botany.

In the middle of the century some also became engrossed by geological topics, best exemplified by the career of James Hector. An 1856 Edinburgh MD, Hector effectively abandoned medicine the following year when he accepted the position of surgeon-geologist on Palliser's expedition to the Canadian Rockies. By 1862 Hector had settled in New Zealand, as Otago's provincial geologist. He was acknowledged as New Zealand's leading scientist until his death in 1907, as Director of the Colonial Museum and founding father in 1867 of the New Zealand Institute, which became the Royal Society of New Zealand in 1933.



Palliser and Hector

A number of other doctors shared James Hector's fascination with the mineral resources of the colony. Samuel Maberly, who resided in the North Island in 1842-3, published an analysis in the *Sydney Morning Herald* of 21 August 1843 of New Zealand ore ((black oxide of manganese) in response to

interest in the 'mineral productions of New Zealand'. His findings followed an earlier paper by Henry Weekes, surgeon superintendent on one of the first immigrant ships to Taranaki. Comparing New Plymouth soil to 'gold earth' he had acquired in Chile, Weekes wrote in 1842 that he had no doubt New Zealand was rich in minerals, adding 'It has been to me a source of regret that I was so ill provided with the means of analysis when in that country.'

Some medical men hoped to profit from their knowledge of science. William Munro MRCS 1851 settled in New Zealand in 1876. Five years later he filed a patent for cement using Taranaki iron sands and volcanic materials, which was quoted to cost only a tenth of the current product. The

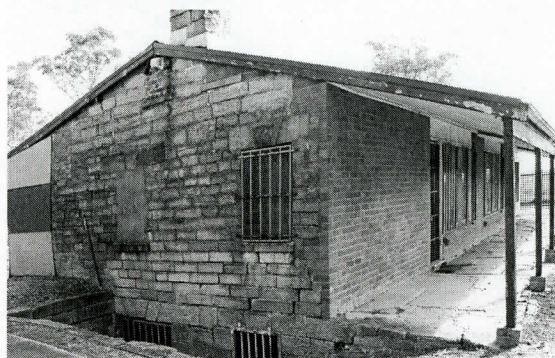
North Otago Times described Munro as a 'gentleman of very considerable scientific attainments'. Tragically, Munro died of pulmonary tuberculosis seven weeks later.

The attributes of such scientific talent is perhaps best summed up in the career of AC Barker MRCS 1842, a doctor turned sheep farmer who was described after his death as 'versatile in his talents, an artist and an architect, and an enthusiastic amateur in geology, botany and science generally, corresponding with such men as Owen and Huxley'. Late in life the polymath combined his medical and scientific talents to patent a soap made from adipocere, a wax-like substance found in the body fat in corpses.

William Redfern revisited

In 1797 surgeon's mate William Redfern took part in the mutiny of the Royal Navy fleet at Nore and was sentenced to death, but this was reduced on account of his age. After four years imprisonment, he was banished to NSW in 1801 and given a free pardon two years later. In 1830 Redfern took his son to Edinburgh to be educated, fully intending to return to Australia, but this plan was thwarted by his death in 1833.

Redfern's *Australian Dictionary of Biography* entry provides no details of this time in Scotland, an omission remedied by a recent article in the *Journal of the Royal Australian Historical Society* of December 2017, 103:2 pp 201-11 by Arthur Jones, a former school principal and alderman in Minto, south of Sydney, where Redfern's estate was located. 'Surgeon William Redfern in London and Edinburgh 1828-1833?' suggests that Redfern suffered a less ignominious fate after his return to the UK than is usually depicted and includes an account of his enrolment in the Edinburgh University Medical School in the final years of his life. The article is a sequel to Jones's two-part biography of Redfern in the *Journal of Medical Biography* (1999) and is a prime example of the persistence required of historical researchers.



Redfern's residence at Campbellfield near Minto.

MEDICAL MUSEUMS IN SOUTH AFRICA

If on your travels, you find yourself in South Africa there are several interesting medical museums which you might like to add to your itinerary.

The first is in Johannesburg and open to the general public – The Adler Museum of Medicine in the Faculty of Health Sciences of the University of the Witwatersrand. The museum opened in 1962 and was presented to the University in 1974. What I liked was that this is a museum, professionally designed, with an excellent exposure in the entrance foyer of the Health Sciences Building, designed to be used by the general public, students and health professionals; all groups will find something of interest.

There are re-creations of an early twentieth century apothecary, an optician's shopfront, a dental surgery, and medical practitioner's rooms, to remind us of former times. Inside there are extensive display areas which comprehensively cover the larger public health issues of HIV/AIDS, malaria and polio. The expansive floor space allows for a display of discarded medical equipment, all well labelled, and the viewer walks between the pieces contemplating the vast changes in the delivery of health care in such a short period of history. The unique medical traditions of Africa are covered in reconstructions of an African herbal shop and a consultation with a sangoma (traditional healer).

Temporary displays are mounted to assist with topics which the health science students are currently studying in their modern curriculum.

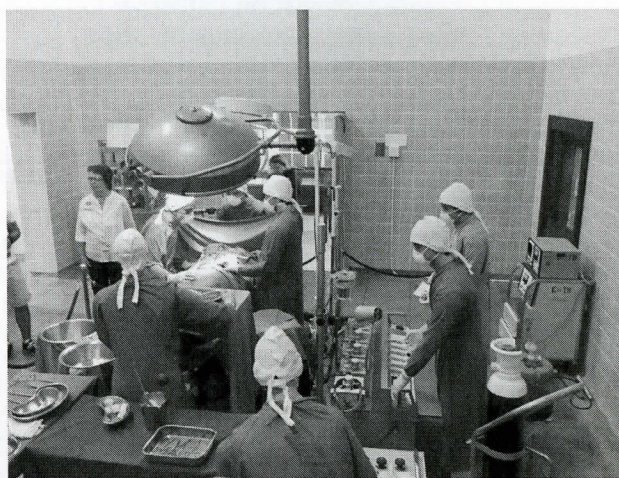


Two medical museums in the Groote Schuur Hospital in central Cape Town are also worth a visit.

When Groote Schuur underwent extensive expansion some years ago their 'old building' was

no longer required for clinical services. This freed up the former operating theatres and emergency receiving room which now house the 'Heart of Cape Town Museum', which is open to the public.

The first human heart transplant took place on 3 December 1967 in these operating theatres and this feat has been recreated just as it was – an operating theatre set up for the donor, and an adjacent theatre for the recipient. There are also re-creations of the animal laboratories, the post-operative recovery room and Christiaan Barnard in his consulting room. Much is made of the ethical considerations that went into this operation during the period of apartheid in South Africa.



The History of Anaesthetics Museum in the Department of Anaesthetics, is not open to the public, but can be viewed by appointment. The museum is located in the corridors of a functioning modern department, but the machinery and artefacts, which date from 1847, are extremely well displayed in purpose-built oak and glass cabinets. The collection began to take shape in 1952 and has been added to as equipment is superseded. The curators have actively collected a fascinating collection of ventilators, battlefield paraphernalia and equipment specifically designed in South Africa. It is great to see that this department, which is clearly a very modern research facility with an eye to the future, also has such a dedication to preserving the past.

For further information on these three museums see:

<https://www.wits.ac.za/health/adlermuseum/collections/>

<https://heartofcapetown.co.za>

<http://www.anaesthesia.uct.ac.za/nagin-parbhoo-history-anaesthesia-museum>

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VICTORIA BRANCH NEWS

The first meeting for 2018 coincided with the Annual General Meeting, when Professor Gordon Whyte was elected as the incoming president for 2018-19. The outgoing president, Dr Pamela Craig, retraced the events of the previous year and in particular, the highly successful ANZSHM conference in July 2017. Pam noted the retirement of Elizabeth Arthur from the committee and thanked her for her several years of work for the Society. She also highlighted the award of the AO (Officer of the Order of Australia), to Professor Janet McCalman in the recent Australia Day honours.

The AGM was followed by a fascinating lecture on the trials of the First World War nurses who were sent to the Salonika Front. The lecture, presented by Natasha McEnroe, the Keeper of Medicine at the Science Museum in London, drew attention to the poor conditions, ranging from unbearable heat to freezing cold, and the lack of supplies. She described the intriguing personal stories of some of the nurses, extraordinary characters in themselves. She told of the introduction, by Henry Wellcome, of a mobile bacteriological laboratory, and its role in the management of infectious disease among the troops.

The next meeting, on 30 May, will hear the story of 'A remarkable family of medical, military and maritime men', presented by Dr Hugh Weaver.

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Hon Secretary MHSV
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NSW BRANCH NEWS

The Royal Australian Historical Society and NSW Branch will hold a joint seminar on The History of Psychiatric Care in NSW on 24 March 1918 from 1-4 pm at History House, 133 Macquarie St, Sydney. The cost of attendance is \$10. Enquiries to 02 9247 8001 or history@rahs.org.au.

Speakers are:

Dr Tony Raeburn, Early Mental Health Nursing in NSW and Australia's First Mental Health Nurse; Martha Entwistle

Dr James Dunk, 1834 Dangerous Lunatics Act

Dr Richard White, Moral Treatment and Therapeutics in NSW Psychiatric Hospitals during the era of Frederick Norton Manning (1867-1898)

Dr Greg Clark, NSW Nurse Theorists for 1963 to Deinstitutionalisation

BLAST FROM THE PAST *Medical History Australia 25 years ago*

Our February 1993 newsletter included a brief notice about the first Australian Nursing History Conference, to be held in Melbourne from 15-16 May 1993. The contact person was named as John Wilson of Tasmania, a PhD student working on the implications for nursing of Sister Kenny's methods of treating poliomyelitis. Wilson had already published jointly on this topic with ASHM's incoming vice-president John Pearn and went on to self-publish *Nobby's daughter: Sister Elizabeth Kenny* (1999).

Unusually, there was a second point of contact for prospective attendees. In March 1993 the *Allemand Centre for the History of Nursing Bulletin* named her as Helen Hamilton, Projects Officer for the Royal College of Nursing, Australia. The *Bulletin* was the publication of the Ontario Society for the History of Nursing, formed in the 1980s and renamed the Margaret M Allemand Society for the History of Nursing in honour of the leadership of Dr Allemand, who had also founded the Canadian Association for the History of Nursing in 1987.

Nursing history in Australia has gone from strength to strength since 1993. The University of Melbourne houses the Australian Nursing and Midwifery History Project, under the honorary directorship of current ANZSHM President Madonna Grehan, and the University of Sydney has a Nursing History and Research Unit, established by Lynette Russell after her retirement as the Foundation Dean of the Faculty of Nursing (now the Sydney Nursing School). The Australian College of Nursing has also maintained an interest and will host its 3rd history conference in the Gold Coast Convention and Exhibition Centre on 27 August 2018.

It is a far cry from the bald 2-line announcement in *Medical History Australia* in February 1993.

JOURNAL WATCH

Louella McCarthy, 'Finding a Space for Women: The British Medical Association and Women Doctors in Australia, 1880-1939', *Medical History*, 62:1, January 2018, 91-111.

A DATE FOR YOUR DIARIES—AUCKLAND December 2019

New Zealand has been the venue for three previous medical history conferences, the first of which was organised in Hamilton in 1987 by the late Dr Rex Wright-St Clair. Rex's efforts inspired two further conferences in Auckland in 1994 and 2005, both convened by Professor Linda Bryder who will again assume this role in 2019, assisted by our two NZ councillors, Dr Derek Dow and Ms Ella Arbury, long-time Society member Dr Kate Prebble, and Dr Katrina Ford.



RESEARCH ASSISTANCE

I am an ANZSHM member and professional historian (Professional Historians Association Victoria & Tasmania: Graduate Historian category) based in Tasmania.

I'm planning on going to the UK in September 2018, returning after Christmas. I am aiming to visit archives while I'm there and would like to offer my research services to other ANZSHM members. I would be happy to access an archive on your behalf if you require something but can't get to England yourself for a while.

I have previous experience at Kew Archives and am willing to gain experience at other archives. I am planning on visiting the areas of London, Bath and Somerset, Oxford and the Cotswolds, and the Midlands, though other areas will be considered, time permitting. You can contact me via email or phone 0487 298 231. Fee negotiable.

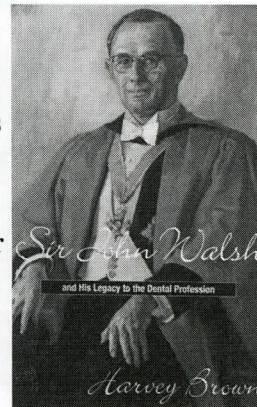
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BOOK NOTICE

Harvey Brown, *Sir John Walsh and his legacy to the dental profession (Auckland 2017), 269pp.*

Melburnian John Patrick Walsh III (1911-2003) began his working life as a dental mechanic before qualifying BDS in 1936. Three years later he entered the Melbourne Medical School, graduating MB BS in 1943. In 1946 he became Dean of the Otago Dental School, a position he retained until he retired in 1971.

Walsh is best remembered as the inventor of the high-speed air-turbine dental drill handpiece, some 3,000 times faster than its predecessors. This comprehensive biography by Harvey Brown, a Dental School staff member 1970-93, complements his 2007 biography of Otago's first Dean, the charismatic Henry Pickerill, pioneer of maxillofacial surgery.



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For the latest information, visit the ANZSHM Internet Website: www.anzshm.org.au

LETTERS, PHOTOGRAPHS AND ARTICLES ARE WELCOME, PREFERABLY IN ELECTRONIC FORMAT.

DEADLINE FOR THE NEXT ISSUE WILL BE 15 MAY 2018.